region (TM, boxed), the potential N-linked glycosylation site (star) and the N-terminus of the recombinant soluble APRIL (sAPRIL) are indicated. **(B)** Comparison of the extracellular protein sequence of APRIL (SEQ ID NO: 6) and some members of the TNF ligand family. Identical and homologous residues are represented in black and shaded boxes, respectively. TNFa, tumor necrosis factor α (SEQ ID NO: 7), LTa, (lymphotoxin α) (SEQ ID NO: 8), FasL, (Fas (CD95) ligand) (SEQ ID NO: 9), TRAIL (SEQ ID NO: 10), TWEAK (SEQ ID NO: 11) and TRANCE (SEQ ID NO: 12), (RANK ligand).

Replace page 10, lines 25-30 with the following paragraph:

Figure 5. An alignment of the human (SEQ ID NO: 5) and mouse (SEQ ID NO: 4) APRIL amino acid sequences showing the extensive identity between the two proteins. Identical residues are marked with the overlaying dot. The underlined residues represent a potential N-linked glycosylation site. The initiating methionine is considered a likely start site, however, it is possible that in frame methionines further upstream may serve as the actual start site, for example, in the human sequence.

Replace page 32, lines 10-21 with the following paragraph:

In order to explore possible activities of APRIL, we expressed a recombinant form of soluble extracellular domain of APRIL (sAPRIL) encompassing amino acids 110 to 250

in 293 cells (9). The full length APRIL gene was amplified from the EST-clone, using a specific 5' forward primer flanked by a EcoRI site (5'-CCAGCCTCATCTCCTTTCTTGC-3') (SEQ ID NO: 13) and a specific 3' reverse primer flanked by an XbaI site (5'-TCACAGTTTCACAAACCCCAGG-3') (SEQ ID NO: 14). The amplified fragment was cut with EcoRI/XbaI and cloned into a modified version of pCRIII (Invitrogen), in frame with an N-terminal Flag peptide (15). The soluble form of APRIL (sAPRIL) was generated using the two primers (5'-AAACAGAAGAAGCAGCACTCTG-3') (SEQ ID NO: 15) and (5'-TCACAGTTTCACAAACCCCAGG-3') (SEQ ID NO: 16) containing a PstI and XbaI site, respectively, and subsequently cloned into a modified pCRIII vector, containing both a HA signal for protein secretion in eukaryotic cells and an N-terminal Flag epitope (15).

IN THE SEQUENCE LISTING

Replace pages 1-4 of the Sequence Listing with pages 1-10 of the substitute Sequence Listing, submitted herewith.

REMARKS

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Applicant has replaced the paragraphs on page 9, lines 13-19, page 10, lines 25-30 and page 32, lines 10-21 with substitute paragraphs that recite sequence identification numbers for the nucleic acid or amino acid sequences recited therein. Applicant has also amended page